

Robertson, Thomas William
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No. CCCLXXXII.

FRENCH'S STANDARD DRAMA.

The Acting Edition.

*To be returned
to J. F. Hadley*
H O M E.

Comedy, in Three Acts.

BY

T. W. ROBERTSON,

Author of "Caste," "School," "Ours," "Society," &c.

NEW YORK:

T. H. FRENCH, Publisher,

38 East 14th Street.

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A Catalogue with above Contents Sent Free.

HOME.

A COMEDY, IN THREE ACTS,

BY
Thomas William
T. W. ROBERTSON,

AUTHOR OF

"Caste," "Society," "School," "Play," "Ours," "David
Garrick," "For Love," "Dreams," "The Young
Collegian," "M.P.," "Noemie," "War," "Two
Gay Deceivers," "The Chevalier de St. George,"
"Faust and Marguerite," "Not a Bit
Jealous," "My Wife's Diary," "Peace
at any Price," "Breach of
Promise," "Birth," &c., &c.

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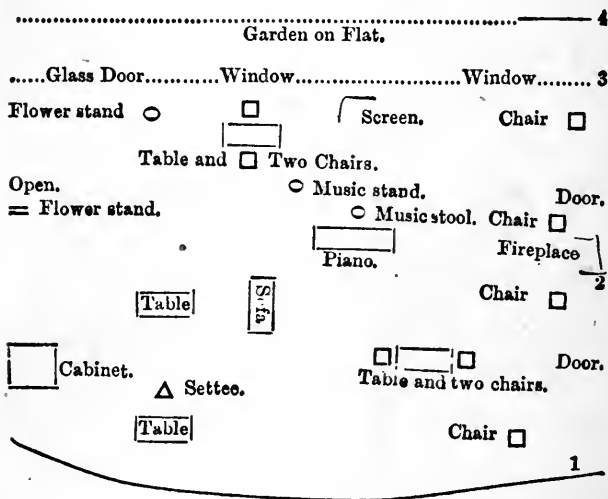
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CAST OF CHARACTERS.

	Haymarket, London, Jan. 14th, 1869.	Wallack's, New York, Dec. 8th, 1873.
<i>Alfred Dorrison</i> (passing under the name of "Colonel John White")	Mr. Sothern.....	Mr. Lester Wallack
<i>Capt Mountraffe</i>	Mr. Compton	Mr. E. Arnott
<i>Mr. Dorrison</i> ...	Mr. Chippendale...	Mr. J. Gilbert
<i>Bertie Thompson</i>	Mr. R. Astley	Mr. W. R. Floyd
<i>Mrs. Pinchbeck</i>	Miss Ada Cavendish	Miss Katharine Rogers
<i>Lucy Dorrison</i> ...	Miss Ione Burke ...	Miss Effie Germon
<i>Dora Thornhaugh</i>	Miss Caroline Hill	Miss Kate Bartlett

S C E N E R Y.

Acts I., II. and III. the same throughout. An Interior in fourth grooves.



Carpet down ; rug to fireplace. On flat at c. niche with pedestal supporting a small statuette. A large screen up L.C. Curtains to windows and gauze to represent glass. Flowers shewn on window sills at third entrances. At R. 2 E. large open French window with curtains drawn aside and leading by two steps to the conservatory. Glass wall of conservatory set off R. 3 G. Over doors L., pen lant, portraits of a gentleman and lady after Reynolds or Gainsborough, period

George IV., half lengths, old-fashioned frames. An old mirror, flanked by silver six-branched candlesticks. On mantelpiece, sundry vases, clock, statuettes of torch-bearers, with jets to burn gas. For Act II., pictures on flat.

Note.—Change for Act II. The table at R. front is brought to R. C. front, and the settee placed on its R. transversely to audience.

PROPERTIES.

ACT I.—Ornaments on cabinet, R. 1 E. Hand bell on table, R. C. Sheets of music on piano, and on a music stand up R. Letter for Colonel White. Tray with luncheon, decanter, claret jug, glasses, silver tankard.

ACT II.—Miniature case for Colonel ; lightning and rain R. U. E. Writing materials. Umbrella for Bertie. Gun (no to fire), explosion ready off R. U. E. as for gun. Book for Mrs. Pinchbeck.

ACT III.—Sunset effect with red glass to lime light, R. U. E. Spoon and glass of port wine. Umbrella for Bertie. Pistol case and two foils. Cane for Bertie.

HOME

ACT I.

SCENE.—Drawing-room looking on garden, R. ; table L., with writing materials. Piano with music. Fireplace with picture of a lady over it; other pictures, music-stand and harp. The room altogether handsomely furnished. LUCY discovered seated on a sofa, L. C., holding a note.

LU. (*agitated*) It's past twelve. What can it mean? (*reading*) "Will come in by the kitchen garden when I have watched your pa a out." (*looking from window*) There he is! There's my Bertie! (*kissing her hand*) He's standing on the gate! He sees me! Now he's tumbled down and hurt himself! Poor fellow! I know he's bruised. That nasty gate to go and let him fall! Why, he's coming in at the window and not at the door! What does this mean? (*Enter BERTIE from R. window, limping*) Bertie!

BER. Lucy! (*they squeeze hands*; BERTIE sits on ottoman, R., and hides his face in his hands) All is over!

LU. Have you hurt yourself so much, then? I saw you fall.

BER. It isn't that.

LU. What then?

BER. I am forbidden the house.

LU. What?

BER. Your father has forbidden me the house.

LU. For what reason?

BER. Yesterday, when you and Dora were out—

LU. Yes.

BER. Mamma told him her mind.

LU. About Mrs. Pinchbeck?

BER. Yes.

LU. (*falling into chair, c.*) Oh, Bertie!

BER. And they had a row, an awful row, the sort of row old friends have when they do row, and your pa told me he would not have me here any more. (*starting up, kneels at her feet and clasps her hands*) Lucy, do you love me?

LU. Bertie!

BER. We shall never be married.

LU. Oh, Bertie !

BER. We are doomed to part.

LU. No, Bertie, we are not. You know, dear, we can always run away.

BER. So we can. (*rises*) That's some comfort. But how are we to get the money ?

LU. (*rises*) The money will come of itself. When two people love each other it always comes right at last.

BER. But I shan't be able to see you.

(*walks about*)

LU. Yes, you will.

BER. How—when—where ?

LU. Somehow—sometimes—somewhere !

BER. You'll always love me then ?

LU. Always.

BER. Devotedly ?

LU. Fondly.

Enter SERVANT shewing in COLONEL WHITE, D. U. E. L.

BER. Truly ?

COL. (L. c.) I beg your pardon ; but the servant shewed me in here,—if I'm not intruding—

LU. } Oh, no ! We are— (they go up)
BER. }

COL. Yes, I saw you were. You're delighted to see me, of course ? Just so. (*crosses to R., looking about the room.* LUCY watches him) I wished to speak to Mr. Dorrison.

LU. Papa ! Papa is out ; he'll soon be back.

BER. (*aside*) Worse luck. (*goes up*)

COL. (*regarding LUCY with intense interest*) Papa ! Then you are Miss Dorrison ?

LU. Yes.

BER. For the present. (*comes down, L.*)

COL. Lucy Dorrison. (*faltering*)

LU. Yes !

COL. Ah ! (*sighs*)

LU. You seem fatigued.

COL. (*embarrassed*) No, quite fresh—from America.

LU. That's a long way.

BER. Sit down.

COL. (*sits, R.*) Thank you. And you are Lucy Dorrison—little Lucy—the baby grown so tall. How old are you ?

BER. }
LU. } Seventeen.

COL. Seventeen ! are you so long

LU. (*to BERTIE*) What an odd ma

BER. (*whispers*) Perhaps he's the fellow come to take the census.

LU. (*to COLONEL*) Papa will not be long.

COL. Papa won't, won't he? (*catches sight of picture, L. ; he rises ; a pause*) Isn't that mamma? Your mamma?

LU. Yes, poor mamma; she's—(*a pause*)

COL. Dead?

LU. Yes, years ago; when I was quite a child. (*turns to look at picture*)

COL. (*after a pause, catching hold of LUCY in his arms and kissing her*) Lucy, don't you know me?

LU. (*alarmed*) Bertie!

BER. (*indignant*) I say—

COL. Don't be alarmed, darling. (*kissing her*) I am your brother Alfred. (*LUCY sinks into chair, c.*)

LU. Brother Alfred!

BER. Brother Alfred!

COL. Grown such a fine girl. When I left you were a baby.

LU. La! My brother Alfred, whom I never saw before, to my remembrance. Perhaps that's the reason I did not know you. I am so glad to see you, my dear brother.

BER. Very glad, my dear brother. (*shaking COLONEL's hands, which are round LUCY's waist*)

COL. Eh! but you have been born since I was away. You're not a never-known, unexpectedly-turned-up, long-lost brother.

BER. No, but I'm Lucy's sweetheart. It's the same thing.

COL. Lucy's sweetheart! The baby got a sweetheart? Why I left you asleep in a cradle, and now I am come back—

LU. You find me awake, and engaged. (*takes BERTIE's arm*)

COL. Yes, you're awake, but I seem to be dreaming. Sixteen years have passed like a single night. It is to-morrow morning, and I'm still asleep. Have sixteen years passed? (*LUCY goes to COLONEL*) Have I run away? Have I come back again? (*kissing LUCY*) Yes, I have. Here I stood in this very room. The furniture the same, everything the same, except that picture; that was not there. My father had just gone out of that door; we had had a furious quarrel. I threatened to leave home; he told me to go. (*LUCY takes COLONEL's arm*) I said I'd enlist as a soldier. He told me I hadn't the courage; that stung me. I'd a few pounds. I went up to London. I did not enlist for a soldier. If my mother had been at home I should not have gone. From

London I went to Liverpool; and half-starved, I worked my way to New York as a common sailor, or rather as an uncommon landsman. In ten years I made a fortune; and when the war broke out I went into the army. I always intended to write home; but as post after post, packet after packet sailed away, I put it off. I return to find the same place but (*looking at picture*) not the same people. I am a man; you are a grown girl; and this is Home. (*crosses, L.*) It's like a fairy tale; and all that's wanted to complete it is a magic door to open, (*turns*) and a beautiful princess to walk in, with whom I fall in love directly, and who falls in love with me, and makes me happy ever after. (*during the last few lines DORA enters, D.L. 1 E.A.; pause*)

LU. Here's the beautiful princess. (*crosses to DORA*)

DOR. I beg your pardon. (*going*)

LU. Don't go. Let me introduce you to my brother. Miss Dora Thornhaugh. She's staying with us.

COL. (*aside*) Is she? I wish she'd stay with me.

(*COLONEL struck*)

DOR. Your brother?

BER. Yes, our brother.

LU. Alfred, from America.

DOR. Whom you believed to be dead.

COL. (*flurried*) Quite a mistake! I am not dead, I assure you.

DOR. It was only yesterday that your papa, Mr. Dorrison, was speaking of you.

COL. (*interested*) Yesterday?

LU. Yes, he said he'd give the world to know if you were alive.

COL. Did he? (*affected*) Did he?

DOR. And to hear from you.

BER. I remember his very words. (*COLONEL crosses to BERTIE*) To hear of him even through a third person.

COL. (*repeating mechanically and watching DORA*) Through a third person!

DOR. Singular, isn't it?

COL. (*mechanically*) Third person singular it is.

LU. But, brother Alfred, why did you go away? (*sits, c.*)

BER. Yes, and why did you come back? (*sits, R. c., on ottoman*)

COL. (*sits, R. c., on ottoman*) I went away because I was an idiot, and a bad-hearted, hot-headed, self-willed, ruffianly boy.

DOR. (*sits on sofa, L.*) You were very young then, and perhaps Mr. Dorrison was rather harsh—severe.

COL. No, he wasn't. (*looks at picture*)

LU. He said he was yesterday. Poor mamma! (*looking at same picture over fireplace*) I don't remember her. (COLONEL sighs) Pa's going to be married again.

COL. What?

LU. Yes, he's going to take a second wife. It makes us so unhappy.

BER. Me particularly, brother Alfred.

COL. (*looking at picture*) A second wife?

LU. Yes. We'll tell you all about it, and perhaps you can advise us. Last autumn he took me to Scarborough, and there we met a Mrs. Pinchbeck.

COL. A widow?

LU. Yes.

DOR. She says she's a widow.

BER. So does her brother.

COL. Oh, she's got a brother too, has she? Pity so many nice girls have brothers.

LU. Captain Mountraffe.

COL. Oh, military?

LU. Yes.

BER. He says so.

LU. Well, papa fell in love.

COL. (*looking at DORA*) How stupid!

BER. Over head and ears.

COL. Idiotic!

BER. Wasn't it? (*looking at LUCY*)

LU. And he used to walk her about, and in three weeks they were engaged.

BER. How improper. (*looking at LUCY*)

COL. Horrible! (*looking at DORA*)

LU. And papa has let her have the White Cottage to live in.

COL. Where the Kennedys used to be twenty years ago.

LU. And all the ladies in the neighbourhood say that there is something about her they don't like.

COL. They mean she's handsome.

LU. No.

COL. Women are seldom enthusiastic about each other. What does Miss Thornhaugh think of her?

DOR. I dislike her.

COL. For what reason?

DOR. For no reason. From instinct.

COL. That's the best reason. Who is she? What was she?

LU. Nobody knows.

BER. Even I don't; but all sorts of things are whispered.

COL. I hate whispers. In cases of this sort people should be outspoken and loud. (*dropping his voice*) Should they not, Miss Thornhaugh?

DOR. (*lowering her eyes*) I think so.

LUC. But what's to be done, brother Alfred?

COL. (*rises*) Hold hard, let me see how we stand. Mrs. —

BER. Pinchbeck.

COL. Pinchbeck is a widow?

BER. Yes.

COL. That's bad.

LUC. Been married twice.

COL. That's worse; she's a double-barrelled widow. Cuts with both husbands—I mean with both edges.

BER. Rather fast.

COL. Round hat, sea-side ribbons fluttering? All that, eh? (*BERTIE nods and rises. LUCY rises*) Um, um, and you're sure that my father wants to marry her?

BER. Immediately.

COL. I'll try and open his eyes to his danger.

LUC. Will you? You dear brother!

(*shakes COLONEL'S left hand*)

COL. Brother! Aye, about her brother—the Pinchbeckian brother—what kind of fellow is he?

BER. A cad.

LUC. Very low.

DOR. A most presuming person. (*rises and comes down, L.*)

COL. (*jealous*) Is he?

BER. He's always playing bagatelle at the Nag's Head.

COL. Where I left my portmanteau.

LUC. And he gets so tipsy.

COL. After dinner?

BER. And before dinner too.

COL. Agreeable 'possum.

BER. The worst of it is that my mother told your father what she thought of the match. They had a row, and she—that's my mother—got into a passion. Did you ever see my mother in a passion?

COL. Never had that pleasure.

BER. I have. I am forbidden the house.

COL. Why?

BER. Mr. Dorrison said he would have nobody within his doors who dared express a doubt as to the perfect eligibility of Mrs. Pinchbeck; and ma said he was an old fool, and so——

COL. That was strong. And so you're counting my sister—my little Lucy?

BER. Yes. I have loved her ever since the early age of two. You know it was first arranged that I was to marry Dora.

COL. Dora? (*jealous*) I beg pardon, Miss Thornhaugh.

BER. But I never cared for her, did I, Dora?

DOR. Never.

COL. (*aside*) He's an idiot.

BER. And Dora never cared for me. Did you, Dora?

DOR. Never.

COL. (*aside*) What a charming girl. Care for *him*! I should think not.

BER. So we cried off.

COL. (*aside*) The lunatic!

BER. And Lucy and I cried on.

LU. (*crosses to BERTIE*) And we are so fond of each other, brother Alfred. (*they go up, and then to window, R.*)

COL. (*aside*) I wonder if anybody could be fond of me. This is the most charming girl.

BER. (*at window-curtain, R.*) Here's Mr. Dorrison and Mrs. Pinchbeck coming down the garden.

COL. (*at R. window*) And that's my father. He looks older, and he's white about the head where he used to be so black. I wish Mrs. Pinchbeck would shew her face. She's plucking a flower. Now she puts it into the governor's coat. Poor old gov'! It's a case, but I'll save him. (*looks at his mother's picture*) I'll save him.

LU. Papa is coming on with his letters.

BER. (*crosses to L.*) I must go out by the back kitchen.

DOR. (*goes up, L.*) I don't want to meet Mrs. Pinchbeck.

COL. Stay! I'm reckoned a smart man in the West. I didn't know how I should be received here, so I brought a letter from myself, (*producing letter*) introducing Colonel White.

LU. Colonel White?

BER. Eh!

COL. If I am known to be the long-lost son Mrs. Pinchbeck's suspicions will be awakened. Better be Colonel White.

LU. Oh, yes; it will be such fun.

BER. Capital.

COL. So if Miss Thornhaugh doesn't mind humouring a deception that may tend to good——

DOR. Your secret is safe with me. (*Exit, D. L. U. E.*)

BER. Good-bye, Lucy. (*whispering*) I shall be in the back kitchen at 8.30, on the left hand side the mangle.

(*Exit, 1 E. L. D. ; LUCY crosses and looking off, L. 1 E.*)

COL. Lucy, now for it. I'll tell you what I——

Enter MR. DORRISON, R. window. He has a flower in his button-hole, and letters in his hand. LUCY crosses to C.

MR. D. Business, business ! as if I could attend to business. I have something higher, purer, nobler. (*seeing COLONEL*) Oh, I beg your pardon.

LU. Papa, a gentleman to speak to you.

COL. As I am a stranger I must introduce myself. (*LUCY going, R.*) My name is White—Colonel White, of the Minnesota Rifles.

MR. D. Lucy, my dear. (*LUCY is going*)

COL. The young lady need not go, for it's a family matter. I have to—I have a letter of introduction.

(*crosses to MR. DORRISON*)

MR. D. From whom ?

COL. From your son.

MR. D. From my son ? From Alfred ?

COL. Yes, he's a comrade of mine.

MR. D. In the American army ?

COL. Yes.

MR. D. Phew ! My son alive ? Thank Heaven ! Thank Heaven ! (*sits down affected, R., on ottoman*)

COL. (*C., aside to LUCY*) Poor old gov ! he's my father and he feels it.

MR. D. (*R.*) Lucy, my love, your brother is alive—Alfred whom I have so often spoken of.

LU. (*L.*) Yes, papa, the gentleman has already told me. (*aside*) I feel so wicked, but I suppose it is right for people to feel wicked sometimes.

COL. How naturally she takes to deception : like a young buckling to the water. I wonder if Dora will do it as well.

MR. D. (*reading*) "Well, and happy, and prosperous." (*shaking hands with COLONEL*) My dear sir, you are most welcome. Of course you have come to stay with us. Where your luggage ?

COL. I left it at the station three miles off.

MR. D. Lucy, tell George to drive over and fetch it.

LU (*aside, and running up stage*) Certainly, papa ! My brother ! Oh, how will all this end ?

(*Exit, L. D. U. E.*)

MR. D. I long to hear of his career. And so he is a soldier. (*sitting on ottoman, R.*) Tell me, my dear Colonel—

COL. White. (*sits L. of ottoman*)

MR. D. Colonel White, tell me all about him ; how he is. Do you know your face somewhat *reminiscent* of him ?

COL. We have been considered alike.

MR. D. And where is he now? Does he intend to return to England? My dear boy—my son—my—(MRS. PINCHBECK *outside window, R.*)

MRS. P. Alfred! (COLONEL *rises*)

MR. D. (*rising and going up*) That voice! Excuse me, but a lady I have kept waiting. We dine at six. We are very quiet people here; don't take the trouble to dress. After dinner we can talk. I'll send for your luggage. My dear Colonel White, consider this house your home while you are in England. We are very quiet people here.

Enter CAPTAIN MOUNTRAFFE, *flushed with drink,*
D.U.E.L., *down L.*

MOUNT They've cleared the lunch away.

COL. (*aside*) I suppose this is brother Pinchbeck.

MR. D. This dreadful man! (*rings, aside; aloud*) Lunch. Perhaps, Colonel White, you will take some lunch? A glass of sherry and a biscuit? (SERVANT *enters, L.* D.U.E. MOUNTRAFFE *whispers him, and SERVANT exits*) It shall be brought to you here.

MRS. P. (*outside, in sweet tones*) Alfred.

MR. D. Pamela, one moment. (*at window*) An arrival. Permit me to introduce you. Colonel White, Captain Mountraffe, the brother of my intended. Captain Mountraffe of the Acapultec Avengers.

MOUNT. Mexican Cavalry. Irregulars!

MRS. P. (*without*) Alfred!

MR. D. (*on steps*) Pray excuse me.

(*runs off at window, R. Dinner gong. SERVANT enters,*
D.L.U.E.; *clears table, L.*)

COL. (*down, R.*) Poor old gov! (*looking at MOUNTRAFFE*) This fellow a soldier! why, he's never been drilled.

MOUNT. (*aside*) I wonder who this chap is? Is he flat, or is he fly-green or down, righteous or shoful?

COL. Pleasant day; been ri ing? (*looking at his trousers*)

MOUNT. No, I've been playing bagatelle.

COL. Bagatelle!

Enter SERVANT *with lunch on tray, U.E.L.D.*

MOUNT. They've no billiard-room at the "Nag's." This is a d—d hole. No wine, no nothing.

SERVANT *puts lunch on table, L.*

SER. Claret, sir; or would you take some beer?

MOUNT. No, champagne.

SER. Sir?

MOUNT. Champagne! don't you hear? Champagne! Two bottles, one for me, one for the other gentleman.

COL. I don't generally drink a bottle of champagne for lunch. (*crosses, L.*)

MOUNT. Never mind, I'll drink it for you. I'm thirsty. Open both bottles, and pour them into that large silver tankard.

(*Exit SERVANT, D.L.U.E.*)

COL. Phew! Smells of tobacco like yesterday's canteen.

(*sits, L. of table, L.*)

MOUNT. Don't think I've had the pleasure of meeting you here before. (*sitting on sofa, R. of L. table*)

COL. No, I have only just arrived. Allow me—

(*helping him*)

MOUNT. I'm not hungry. I've had one or two nips of brandy at the "Nag."

COL. Nice place, the "Nag."

MOUNT. Slow—skittle alley, but no tables. Do you know Mr. Dorrison?

COL. Slightly.

MOUNT. I know him intimately. (*enter SERVANT with tankard, L.D.U.E.*) Oh, here you are.

SERVANT *puts down tankard on table, L., and goes off, L.D., and returns with claret jug.*

COL. Have you retired from the army, Captain?

MOUNT. Yes.

COL. What service were you in?

MOUNT. Cavalry, Mexican Cavalry. Acapultec Avengers. Your health. (*drinks*) Old Dorrison's wine's capital.

COL. Sharp work in Mexico lately.

MOUNT. Sharp! (*getting gradually drunk*) I've been in the saddle forty hours together.

COL. I've no doubt. (*aside*) Running away the whole time.

MOUNT. By Jove, sir! when the trumpet used to sound the charge (*drinks*) and we used to form (*drinks*) and we saw the enemy behind us—I mean before us—we used to—(*drinks*) Oh, beautiful! Have you seen any service?

COL. A little. (*aside*) This fellow's a liar. I'll try him. I had a friend in the Mexican Cavalry—one Frank Adderly.

MOUNT. Fair man? (*looking in tankard*)

COL. Yes.

MOUNT. Tall?

COL. Six feet.

MOUNT. Knew him well.

COL. (*aside*) That's a lie for he don't exist

MOUNT. He was my second in a duel.

COL. Were you hit?

MOUNT. No. I kill'd my man. (*drinks*) But I have been hit—(*rises*)—here, there, everywhere—(*sits*)—in fact, my body is so scarred I should be ashamed to be seen undressed.

COL. You're quite right. Always wear clothes; the less that's seen of you the better.

MOUNT. Oh! my old companions, my brave comrades, good hearts and true, excuse a manly tear. (*maudlin*)

COL. By all means; shed two if you find it agreeable.

MOUNT. (*solemnly*) Here's to their memory. (*drinks*)

COL. To their memory. (*drinks a glass of claret*)

MOUNT. (*rises, shaking hands*) You're a man. Have a cigar? (*offers case*)

COL. We mustn't smoke in the drawing-room.

MOUNT. I may. (*lights cigar*) I can do as I like here. (*COLONEL looks at his mother's picture*) Dorrison is sweet upon my sister. (*laughs*) They're going to be spliced. (*laughs*) Queer old cuss. So it's Liberty Hall for me. (*sings*) Liberty Hall, Liberty Hall.

COL. (*aside*) I suppose at present it would be premature to kick him. So Mr. Dorrison is sweet on your sister.

MOUNT. Yes, quite right, he should be, for I am sweet upon his daughter. Nice little thing. Have you seen her?

COL. Yes. And does she reciprocate?

MOUNT. She has cast an eye on the young soldier, and his appearance has had its usual effect. If old Dorrison would shell out handsomely—and I think he would to get rid of me—she'd make a nice little wife. (*rises*) But I've two strings to my bow. There's a Miss Thornhaugh—Dora—staying here, a friend of my Lucy's.

COL. A friend of your Lucy's—yes.

MOUNT. She has cast a favourable eye upon yours truly. What's the matter? (*sits*)

COL. Nothing, a pain—a tingling.

MOUNT. In your head?

COL. In my foot.

MOUNT. Gout? (*getting more drunk*)

COL. No, irritability. I can kick it off—I mean I can walk it off.

MOUNT. So whichever has the most cash, I'll make Mrs. Captain Mountraffe. What have we soldiers of fortune

but our appearance to live upon? Here's the health of Mrs. Captain Mountraffe, Lucy or Dora, whichever she may be. You must see these two girls and give me your opinion as to my selection. What's your name?

COL. White.

MOUNT. White, my dear boy (*rises*) between ourselves there's only one thing disgusts me with women.

COL. What's that?

MOUNT. They are so d—d selfish. Selfishness is a bad thing. (*takes up glass of claret and drinks*)

COL. In women.

MOUNT. Beastly. Give me your hand. (*shakes hands, but COLONEL puts napkin round his hand*) The grasp of friendship knits the—(*falls on sofa*) Black, my boy, you're drunk.

COL. Am I?

MOUNT. Very drunk. Oh, Black, I'm ashamed of you, and (*going to sleep*) you're asleep, too. Let's go to sleep together. The grasp of friendship—(*dinner gong*) of friendship—knits the—heart. (*sleeps on sofa*)

COL. What a skunk! (*enter DORRISON and MRS. PINCHBECK from window, R., come down, C. LUCY and DORA enter, L.U.E.D.*) Nothing to be got out of him about his sister. How shall I—Oh, here's the governor. (*crosses, R.*)

MR. D. Colonel, though you have lunched so recently, will you come down to dinner? (*introducing*) Mrs. Pinchbeck, Colonel White, my son's friend.

COL. (*aside*) I know that face. (*MRS. PINCHBECK highly fascinating*)

MR. D. Will you give Mrs. Pinchbeck your arm, Colonel? Dora, my dear. (*taking DORA's*) Lucy, Captain Mountraffe will—(*sees him asleep*) Ah, Lucy, you must follow by yourself.

COLONEL takes off MRS. PINCHBECK; DORRISON, DORA, L.D.U.E. At that moment BERTIE enters window, R., and runs to LUCY, kneels at her feet, and is about to kiss her hand. MOUNTRAFFE yawns, which frightens BERTIE; he is running off as the drop falls quickly.

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE.—*As before, excepting table, R.C., which is shifted to R., and ottoman to R.C. MOUNTRAFFE discovered, R. of table L., on edge of sofa. MRS. PINCHBECK at fireplace, L., with elbow resting on mantelshelf.*

MOUNT. Pam, I don't understand your game.

MRS. P. (*coming down, L., from fireplace*) I don't suppose you can ; you're generally drunk.

MOUNT. Are you going to marry old Dorrison, or are you not ?

MRS. P. Didn't we arrange between us that I was to become Mrs. Dorrison ? (*sighing*)

MOUNT. Certainly, that was the idea.

MRS. P. Well !

MOUNT. Well, for the last two months, ever since the arrival of this Colonel White, you've kept putting off and putting off what old Dorrison calls the happy day. (*Mrs. PINCHBECK sighs*) White only arrived back from London yesterday, and I've watched you, and it seems to me that you're setting your cap at him.

MRS. P. What if I am ?

MOUNT. You're playing a wrong game. Dorrison's rich, a wealthy retired manufacturer, something in iron, coal mines, sugar-tongs and such like. What's White ? A soger, without means—a col nel, he says, like me.

MRS. P. (*rising, crossing to R.*) Like you ? Why, he has fought, and is a gentleman. Like you ! a loafing vagabond, fit only to swear in a tap-room or get tipsy in a kitchen.

(*sits on ottoman, R.*)

MOUNT. (*laughs*) Are you trying to hurt my feelings, or do you wish to awaken me to a sense of shame ? Don't cut up rough, or it will be worse for you. What am I ? Ugh ! What are you ?

MRS. P. A degraded wretch ! for I am your sister.

MOUNT. You're something else besides that. Don't do the grand because you think you're going to be independent of me. Think of all I've done for you and be grateful. When our honoured papa, who was a corn-cutter by trade, and a swindler by profession, died, leaving us no inheritance but his own bad name and worse character, didn't I get you married ?

MRS. P. To a man old enough to be my father.

MOUNT. What of that ? I thought he had plenty of ready.

MRS. P. He hadn't a penny.

MOUNT. No, the old villain, so I found out when it was too late. However, he died soon; in a year you were a widow. Then I married you to poor Fritz.

MRS. P. An adventurer.

MOUNT. One of the finest billiard players in Europe, and as for cards, he could make them do as he liked, and he did. Wasn't it my idea, our going to America?

MRS. P. (*rising*) Silence, you utter scamp! Remind me no more of what is past, of how you have taken me from the Spa to the sea-side, from table d'hôte to table d'hôte, that I might catch a flat as you call it, and that you might win money of the poor dupe who thought me a fine woman, and who listened, too, as I displayed the only poor accomplishment I had. Oh, how I hate the piano! Oh, I hate men!

(*crosses to L.*)

MOUNT. (*rises*) Both good things to play upon. Ha, ha! very good; full of notes. Ha, ha! very good again.

MRS. P. Oh, how I pant to rid myself of the past, and of you, you incubus! To take my place amongst the wealthy, the respectable, the noble of the world; to feel no longer an adventuress, the jest of every saucy boy and impertinent old man. To drive round to the tradesfolk and say, "Send it to the Lodge." Oh, I shall accomplish it, I will! I feel that a change is coming over me. (*crosses to R.*)

MOUNT. If you've done play-acting, and trying to persuade yourself that you're a good and injured creature, and failing to do so, perhaps you will tell me what's your programme. Is it silly old Dorrison, or Yankee White?

MRS. P. (*changing her manner*) I'll tell you. See if any one's about.

MOUNTRAFFE goes to D.L., then sits, L. of table, L.

MOUNT. Not a peepcorn in the castor.

MRS. P. (*R. of table, L.*) Before Colonel White went to London I was sitting in the study with Mr. Dorrison, when he was called out to see somebody. I noticed that he appeared very much absorbed in a letter that lay upon the table before him. When he left the room I wanted to see what it was.

MOUNT. Naturally.

MRS. P. I read it.

MOUNT. Of course.

MRS. P. It was from his son in America.

MOUNT. White's friend?

MRS. P. Yes. I learnt it by heart, and remember every word. The letter said:—"Pardon me, my dear father. for

having introduced a stranger beneath your roof under an assumed name. My friend, the Graf von Eberstein, is a most singular man. Of one of the first families in Germany, enormously rich, the owner of large estates. he chose to come to America to serve as a simple soldier in the National army. It is now his pleasure to visit England in search of a wife. He is intensely sentimental, and desires to meet a woman who will love him for himself alone. To this end he wished me to introduce him as an American officer, in short as Colonel White—so that divested of the appendages of rank, and wealth, and power, he might win the woman of his heart. I humoured his scheme in the hope that my dear sister, Lucy, might love and be beloved by him, for his name, title and distinction are his smallest merits."

MOUNT. A German nobleman! You take away my breath.

MRS. P. Do I? What a service I am rendering to society!

MOUNT. Pam, it's a do. (*rises*)

MRS. P. Eh?

MOUNT. A plant. I've suspected that Colonel all along.

MRS. P. But the hand-writing was Alfred Dorrison's.

MOUNT. That might be forged.

MRS. P. But the allusions to his sister; his wish that he should marry her.

MOUNT. That looks true. Selfishness is always righteous.

MRS. P. To be a lady! to go to Court!

MOUNT. (L.) If he's a German swell, he might get me a license for a table. Oh, my little rouge et noir! Oh, my little pair et impair! Oh, my little passe et manque pr-r-r-r. (*imitates roulette*)

MRS. P. To lean on his arm, to see him wait with his hat off as I step into the carriage. (*aloud*) It's a bright dream.

MOUNT. (*goes to her*) Pammey, wake up. It's delusion, nightmare, moonshine, wind, gas, bosh. (*crosses to R.*) Stick to old Dorrison, and—(*enter COLONEL, D.U.E.L.*) How are you, Colonel? Talk of the German nobility and—

MRS. P. Sorry I'm forced to run away, Colonel, but—(*aside to COLONEL*) I'm waited for. (*crosses to L.*) I'll be back in an hour. Will you be here? (*COLONEL signifies assent.*)

MOUNT. (*aside*) She's at it. (*crosses to L. Exit MRS. PINCHBECK, D.L.U.E.; aloud*) I'm going to ride that new horse of Mr. Dorrison's.

COL. Take care you are not thrown.

MOUNT. Why? (*at door*)

COL. You'd hurt yourself.

MOUNT. (*aside*) I think he means mischief. *Adios*, as we used to say in Mexico

3 LUCY *enters at window*, R. MOUNTRAFFE *ogles her and goes off*, D.L.U.E.

COL. Brother Pinchbeck suspects me. How I long to throw off the mask and twist his neck. Lucy, if you shew yourself at that balcony, you will produce young Romeo. (LUCY *goes to balcony through window*, R.) He's hiding among the black-currant bushes, as if he were come of the gang of housebreakers (*enter BERTIE, limping, window*) that everybody about here seems to be afraid of.

BER. Pa out?

LU. Yes, Bertie.

BER. (*whispering*) How is my own?

LU. Quite well. How's mine?

BER. Sprained his ankle dropping from a wall. Ah, Alfred, last night there was another house broken into close by.

COL. (*crosses to C.*) Never mind the housebreakers. (*puts ring on LUCY's finger*)

LU. Oh! isn't that pretty, Bertie?

COL. Lucy, you don't ask me about my journey to London.

LU. (L.C.) Oh, tell us!

COL. It turned out exactly as I thought. Mrs. Pinchbeck is the lady. Jack Trandham, who has just arrived from New York, and who was fleeced by them, has confirmed my suspicions. When I was quartered in New Orleans there was a lady who was the talk of the whole city. She was the wife of a Chevalier Kopf, a German, who was the luckiest man at cards that ever turned up the same ace five times running. Play was deep at the Chevalier's, and this loafer, this brother stood in for his share. As for the Chevalieress, all the young men in the city were mad about her, and they all crowded the Chevalier's rooms. So long as they played and had money, so long, they say, the lady smiled. But, however, you won't understand me if I tell you more.

LU. But if you never saw her in New Orleans how came you to recognise her when you met her here?

COL. By her photograph. (*shews photograph*) I've got one, formerly the property of poor Jack Trandham; he paid rather dearly for that *carte-de-visite*.

LU. But now she is called Mrs. Pinchbeck.

COL. Pinchbeck was the name of her first husband. (BERTIE *takes photograph from COLONEL*) So when the Chevalier Kopf

died, or was hanged, or transported, or whatever was his end, his name had so European as well as Transatlantic an odour that Pamela—my Pamela—ha! ha! went back to her first married patronymic.

BER. Your Pamela? What do you mean by *your* Pamela?

COL. Don't you know? (*to Lucy*) Don't he know? There's a good girl to keep a secret.

BER. Oh! Lucy, a secret from me!

COL. Hold your tongue, spooney. It was my secret. To rescue my father from the fatal fascination of this woman who would be a curse and a misery to him, and bring his silver plate with sorrow to the pawnbroker's. I knew that I must do something strong—fight her with her own weapons, fraud, finesse, artifice, deception, and dissimulation. I must open his eyes as if they were oysters, with a knife; so I wrote another letter to him from myself.

BER. }
LU. } From yourself?

COL. Yes, Alfred Dorrison—telling him Colonel White was only an assumed name; that I was in reality a wealthy German nobleman, who for sentimental reasons tried to pass for a poor soldier, that I might find a woman who would love me for myself alone. The bait took. Mrs. Pinchbeck swallowed it—hook and all—no doubt my father told her. It's funny to see her glancing and ogling me. She thinks she is the woman for my money—for my title. She is to be the future Gräfin von Eberstein; and when the time is ripe, my worthy, though infatuated sire shall see—what he shall see.

BER. Does Miss Thornhaugh know of this plan?

COL. (*changing his manner*) Miss Thornhaugh? No. A secret's no secret if you tell it to everybody. Why do you ask?

BER. Because I thought you two were courting. (*Lucy laughs*)

COL. (*angrily*) What!

BER. So did Lucy. We said you were both sweet.

COL. (*flushed and annoyed*) Oh, you said that, did you? Then you are a couple of fools. Why, Dora—I mean Miss Thornhaugh, would not think of me. She's only eighteen and I'm six-and-thirty. Such a supposition? How dare you trouble yourself about my affairs? (*goes up*)

LU. (*aside to BERTIE*) Bertie! (*BERTIE crosses to L.C.*) It's true or he would not be so angry.

BER. I did not mean to offend you. If you don't think Miss Thornhaugh a nice girl— (*goes over to B.*)

COL. This fellow's an awful idiot. (*aside*) I shan't like him for a brother-in-law.

DOR. (*outside*) Lucy !

LU. Here she is.

COL. Who ? the Pinchbeck ?

LU. No, Dora. (*DORA enters, D. E. 1 L. ; she has a music-book in her hand*) Let's leave 'em alone, poor things. (*to BERTIE*) Let's go into the shruberry. (*crosses to R.*)

BER. Yes, I've got some sweetmeats in my pocket.

DOR. Going ?

LU. Only for a moment. (*aside to BERTIE*) Alfred looks very sheepish.

BER. Strange, isn't it ? Whatever he can see in that girl, I cannot—

(*Exit LUCY and BERTIE, talking, by window, R. DORA puts music on piano. A long pause. COLONEL looks at birds under glass shade*)

COL. I'd always give my eyes to be alone with this girl for five minutes, and whenever I am alone with her I haven't a word to say for myself. (*aloud*) That music, Miss Thornhaugh ?

DOR. (*at piano*) Yes.

COL. (*aside*) As if it could be anything else. How stupid of me. (*aloud*) New music ?

DOR. Yes.

COL. New laid—I mean, fresh from the country—fresh from London, or—yes—I—(*DORA sits on music stool at piano. This scene is played with great constraint on both sides. COLONEL bends over DORA at piano*) Going to play any of it now ?

DOR. No. I must practise it first. I can't play at sight.

COL. Can't you really ? Don't you believe in—music—at first sight.

(*DORA drops a music book, COLONEL picks it up. DORA tries to pick it up. They knock their heads together ; mutual confusion. As they rise each has hold of the book*)

COL. }
DOR. } I beg your pardon. (*both trembling*)

DOR. It's nothing.

COL. Nothing, quite so.

(*DORA sits on music stool. As she does so both leave hold of the book and it falls again*)

DOR. I thought you had the book.

COL. (*picking it up*) And I thought you had it, and it appears that neither of us had it. Ha! ha! (*aside*) Fool that I am! (DORA *sits thoughtfully*, COLONEL *bending over her at piano*; a pause) Won't you play something?

DOR. I don't know how to play.

COL. Oh, well, play the other one. (*they resume their attitudes*; a pause) The weather has been very warm to-day, has it not?

DOR. Very.

COL. Looks like thunder to me.

DOR. Does it?

COL. Are you fond of thunder—I mean fond of music? I should say are you fond of lightning? (DORA *touches keys of piano mechanically*) Do play something.

DOR. No, I—I didn't think of what I was doing. What were you talking about?

COL. About? You—me—no! About thunder—music—I mean lightning.

DOR. I'm afraid of lightning.

COL. (*interested*) Indeed!

DOR. Singular, we were talking about lightning to-day.

COL. How odd! (DORA *plays piano*)

DOR. Mrs. Pinchbeck and myself. She isn't afraid of lightning.

DORA *plays piano each time* MRS. PINCHBECK'S name is mentioned during this scene.

COL. I should think she isn't. Lightning is just the sort of thing she wouldn't be afraid of.

DOR. You admire Mrs. Pinchbeck very much, I think?

(*drily*)

COL. No, I don't

DOR. I thought you did.

COL. No, it's not Mrs. Pinchbeck whom I admire.

DOR. No?

COL. No, the lady I admire—(*his back touches a music stand*; the stand falls) I beg your pardon.

DOR. That's a nasty music stand; it's always in the way.

COL. (*picking up stand*) I don't know what's the matter with me.

DOR. Perhaps it's a nervous affection?

COL. Yes, it's an affection—(*aside*)—Dora, at the heart.

DOR. I sometimes have it.

COL. An affection? (*leaning over piano*)

DOR. Yes.

COL. In what region? About the——

DOR. About Mrs. Pinchbeck. I don't like her.

COL. Poor woman!

DOR. I can't bear her.

COL. Perhaps you'll say that of me when I'm absent.

DOR. Oh, no. (*confused*)

COL. What do you think of Captain Mountraffe?

DOR. Oh, horrid! (*she changes tune to the "Power of Love."*)

COL. (*whispering*) He would not make a nice husband, would he?

DOR. Do you think Mrs. Pinchbeck would make a nice wife?

COL. No! very well as widow, but not so well as wife. If I had a wife—all to myself—I mean——

DOR. Yes?

COL. I should like a wife—(*gasping*) if I could have one invented especially for me, about your height, with blue eyes and light hair. (*this description to be altered according to the appearance of the lady who plays DORA*) And she should wear a white dress, and—and to be afraid of lightning, and—and—her name should be Dora. (*seizes her right hand*)

Enter MR. DORRISON, D.L.U.E., down, L.

DOR. Colonel White? (*DORA, who has continued the pathetic strain of music until the entrance of MR. DORRISON, commences a lively waltz or polka. COLONEL assumes a conventional position, a little distance from piano*)

DOR. Pretty waltz, isn't it? (*trembling*)

COL. Very. So pleasant and cool. What's it called?

DOR. "The Lover's Leap." Oh, Mr. Dorrisson!

MR. D. Dora, my dear, (*she ceases playing*) would you be kind enough to leave me? I want to talk to the Colonel.

COL. (*aside*) What's coming now? (*DORA rises from piano and is going off, L.U.E.D.*) You've forgotten the new music.

(*gives her music book. Squeezes her hand under book. DORA returns the pressure, and gives him an assenting look; exit DORA, D.L.U.E.*)

MR. D. (*sits L., of L. table*) Colonel, I wish to speak to you; sit down (*COLONEL sits on sofa, R. of table, L.*) I'm going to tell you a secret, although I think you are somewhat—what shall I say? unconfidential with me. Eh, Colonel White? (*with emphasis*) Eh, Colonel White?

COL. (*aside*) I see; he's alluding to the German Graf.

MR. D. Perhaps I know what I know. And perhaps I know more than you think I know.

COL. (*aside*) I must pretend to be embarrassed. (*feigns confusion*) Oh really, Mr. Dorrison.

MR. D. Of course I don't mean to extort from you anything you wish to keep secret, but I'm so thoroughly English in my notions—English, and not German—not German—(*with emphasis*)—that I can't keep a secret—even when it's not my own! even when it's a secret of sentiment, which above all things is a secret I would respect.

COL. (*looking down, aside*) How one lie does breed another. I lied when I called myself Colonel White, now I've to lie again, and pretend I'm somebody else. When I come to myself it will be a sort of personal, individual resurrection. (*aloud*) Then—then, Mr. Dorrison, you know who I am.

MR. D. I do.

COL. May I ask how?

MR. D. I will be candid. I have received a letter from my dear boy.

COL. From Alfred?

MR. D. Yes. And now, my dear Count—I should say my dear Colonel—

COL. Whichever you please. It's quite indifferent to me.

MR. D. Which shall we say then—Count or Colonel?

COL. Take your choice. (*aside*) I feel such a double-distilled, double-breasted, double-barrelled liar, that it doesn't matter who I am.

MR. D. However, though you won't confide in me, I will confide in you. You are a man of high feeling and sentiment, and as such will understand me. You are aware I am about to marry Mrs. Pinchbeck? (COLONEL *assents*) I am sixty-three years of age.

COL. Is not that rather young? I mean isn't Mrs. Pinchbeck rather younger?

MR. D. She is about—um—twenty-five. Yes. Perhaps you think me an old fool?

COL. Oh, no.

MR. D. (*shaking hands*) I was sure you would understand me. Though past sixty, I am as young constitutionally as most men of forty.

COL. Your daughter will have a—

MR. D. A mother—a mother. I have considered that point, and consulted my daughter's interests in the step I have resolved on.

COL. In the stepmother you have resolved on—

MR. D. Step, not stepmother. But it was not to speak of my future wife, or my daughter, that I sought this interview with your lordship.

COL. (*with generous shame*) My lordship?

MR. D. It was not to speak of them.

COL. Of whom then?

MR. D. Of my son.

COL. Of your son?

MR. D. Of Alfred. Before he left his home, though he was wild, I was harsh. I should have remembered he was but a boy; but he was a fine fellow—a splendid nature. Through all his escapades he never once deceived me; he was always above deception. He never told me a lie. A noble quality, eh, Count?

COL. Very.

MR. D. My second marriage will not injure him. I wish you to tell him so, if you will do me that favour. I do not wish to break the news of my wedding, or to tell him of the disposition of my property. I had, I admit, disinherited him. I was wrong, I was unjust. After the wedding I shall remake my will thus—At my death, one-third of what I have to my daughter, one-third to my wife, the remainder to my son. (*affected*) My boy shall find that his father has not forgotten him. (*a pause*) Will you let him know this, Count—I should say Colonel?

COL. I will. (*both rise*)

MR. D. Thanks! Excuse me now, for I am very busy. Indeed, the wedding is to take place this week. Break the matter gently to Alfred; and your secret, Count von Eberstein, is safe with me. I have not breathed it to a soul, not even to Pamela. (*shaking hands*) If you have anything to suggest (*going up*) I shall be in my study for the next hour.

(*Exit MR. DORRISON, D.L.U.E.*)

COL. (*affected*) Poor old gov, to think of me when I was so far away under his own roof; to find no one in the world but me, his son, to confide in, when I am stealing away the heart of the woman he adores. Is this manly? Whom am I fighting? Who is my antagonist? A woman, and a woman who at least pretends to care for me. I have serious misgivings. Then, again, if I retired, if I left the field, and let my father marry her—marry her—and she would be Lucy's stepmother. My sister Lucy in her power; perhaps to be sacrificed to that drunken cad, Mountaffe. For once my father's wife, who can judge the limits of her influence over him? For she is fascinating! even I feel that as I make sham love to her. (*looks at his mother's picture over*

fireplace) No, she shall never reign queen of this hearth, where you were once the sun and centre. No shrinking. It's my duty. I must do it! but how I hate fighting in ambuscade. I shall be delighted to get out again into the open—(*enter MRS. PINCHBECK, a book in her hands, at window, R.*) What, the enemy—her I love—the adored one—her I am about to take from my father, never to make my own.

(*This scene to be played with intense sentimentality*)

MRS. P. (*sighing*) Ah! you are here! (*advancing to table, R.*) I was very wrong to come. Why did you ever enter this house to disturb my peace of mind? I was happy till I saw you.

COL. Pamela!

MRS. P. John! (*shuddering*) Oh, I am very wrong.

COL. Is it wrong to love as we do? If so, then indeed I am very guilty. What are you reading?

MRS. P. Tennyson.

COL. What poem?

MRS. P. "The Lord of Burleigh."

COL. I don't know it.

MRS. P. No! It's a wonderful story and a true one. A Lord Burleigh passed himself off for a poor landscape painter, and in that guise won the affections of a village maiden. His reason for pretending to be poor was that, disgusted with the attentions he received from match-making mammas and daughters trying for a coronet, he wished to be loved for himself alone. (*watching the effect of her words*)

COL. (*apparently interested*) Indeed!

MRS. P. Noble, was it not?

COL. Y-e-s.

MRS. P. But I cannot believe that any man could be so good. (*her eyes raised*)

COL. (*taking her hand*) Can you not?

MRS. P. No. (*takes book up*) 'Tis a creation of the poets. He does not exist.

COL. (*with a grand air*) Right! he does not exist.

MRS. P. No?

COL. No.

MRS. P. No.

COL. No! I thought you said the story was true!

MRS. P. Oh, how I could love such a man!

COL. Could you if he existed?

MRS. P. I could work for him, I could die for him. (*looks round for chair. COLONEL gets one*) Oh! (*sighing; both sit*)

COL. Oh! (*sighing*) What does the poem say? That is,

what does the lady say ? For every lady is a poem unpublished—I mean unmarried.

MRS. P. "She"—that is the village maiden—replies to Lord Burleigh—

"Replies in accents fainter—
 'There is none I love like thee.
 He is but a landscape painter,
 And a village maiden she."

Beautiful, is it not ?

COL. Delicious ! To be a landscape painter, and poor ! going on tick for your colours, and all that. Delightful ! Go on.

MRS. P. Do you wish it ?

COL. Yes.

MRS. P. Anything to please you—

"I can make no marriage present,
 Little can I give my wife !
 Love will make our cottage pleasant,
 And I love thee more than life."

Oh ! (*sighing*) Isn't that charming ?

COL. Charming ! Not to be able to make a marriage present is so refreshing.

MRS. P. Then he takes her to the castle, and tells her he is lord of all.

"Not a lord in all the county
 Is so great a lord as he."

COL. What does the lady say to that ?

(*reads*) "All at once the colour flushes
 Her sweet face from brow to chin,
 As it were with shame she blushes
 And her spirit changed within."

MRS. P. Oh ! it's too much ; the poem agitates me to that degree—

COL. (*reads*)

"Then her countenance all over
 Pale again as death did prove,
 But he clasped (*moves his chair close to* MRS. PINCH-
BECK and clasping her) her like a lover,
 And he cheered her soul with love."

Now you read, Pamela.

MRS. P. "So she strove against her weakness,
Though at times her spirit sank.
Shaped her heart, with woman's meekness,
To all duties of her rank."

COL. Poor creature ! To be made a lady, and to suffer it with such angelic sweetness ! But I believe there are many women who could do the same.

MRS. P. If they loved.

COL. If they loved, of course.

MRS. P. Oh, I understand her feelings. Listen !

"And she murmured, Oh that he
Were once more that landscape painter
Which did win my heart from me." (weeps)

COL. (*aside*) What a lovely humbug ! It's worth while crossing the Atlantic to contemplate her.

MRS. P. What is greatness when compared to love ? What is wealth—power ?

COL. Nothing.

MRS. P. I should have loved him better as a landscape-painter.

COL. (*quickly*) Pamela, could you love me ?

MRS. P. Oh, John ! (*rises and sits on ottoman ; he sits beside her holding her hand all the time*)

COL. I am but a poor soldier, but what of that ? Pamela, love is real wealth. Love is like huge diamonds, too priceless to be bought. What are the smaller cares of this small world so that we are together ? What is the cramped, narrowed worldling's creed compared to the passion, the devotion that consumes me ?

MRS. P. John, you—alarm—you—

COL. Let us leave this wretched region of arithmetic, this elysium of intellects that recognise as the only sublime truth the fact that two and two are four, and seek some less commercial sky. Pamela, when I look in your eyes, when I have your hand clasped in mine, when I feel your breath flicker and thicken on my face, you transport me from myself. I feel that I could fly with you to some high Alpine eyrie, and there, amid the snow-capped mountains closed in by the clouds, live and die with thee ; that I could quit this common, vulgar earth, and floating upon a tiny boat, out upon an unknown sea, dwell amid the purple waves, uncheered by any sight or sound but thee ; that, locked in your arms, I could plunge from off a rock into the air, and, as we sank to certain death, count on'y the treasured seconds that your heart echoed its last beats to mine ! Pamela !

MRS. P. Colonel White, you terrify me. (*feigning alarm*)
COL. I know I do.

*Enter MR. DORRISON, D.L.U.E., and LUCY and DORA,
unobserved by COLONEL and MRS. PINCHBECK.*

COL. Say, is my passion returned?

MRS. P. (*coquetting, her hands over her face*) No! no! no!

(MR. DORRISON *appears relieved*)

COL. Don't say no charming—charming creature. I know you are engaged to Mr. Dorrisson.

MRS. P. Yes, remember that.

COL. I do remember it.

MR. D. Apparently not, sir. (*striking table*)

COL. (*aside*) Oh, the governor.

MRS. P. Oh, heavens!

MR. D. Mrs. Pinchbeck, you have behaved with truth and honour, as I knew you would. You reminded my treacherous guest—my son's friend with a false name—of the bond between us.

MRS. P. (*R., aside*) What shall I do?

MR. D. (*C., aside to her*) Bless you, my darling! I have more faith in you than ever. (*crosses to MRS. PINCHBECK, and brings her L.C. To COLONEL*) For the Count von Eberstein I have no words. He will quit this roof to-morrow, and will carry with him the contempt of the man he has endeavoured to wrong so greatly, in addition to the sting of failure.

Enter SERVANT and lights gas over fireplace. Lights up.

DOR. (*after a pause*) The gallant Count, or Colonel, or courier in his master's clothes, whichever he may be, appears to fail in everything he undertakes. He has endeavoured to supplant you, Mr. Dorrisson. He has not succeeded. He has endeavoured to make you, Mrs. Pinchbeck, forget your plighted faith, and he has not succeeded. He has dared, too, to pay his easily obtained addresses to me, and he has not succeeded. (*surprise of MR. DORRISON*)

MRS. P. What's that?

MR. D. George! (*to SERVANT*) take Colonel White's portmanteau to the station in the morning. (*exit SERVANT, L.U.E.D.*) I trust that Colonel the Graf von Eberstein White will leave the house with a perfect conviction of the opinions entertained of him. Our sense of self-respect will not suffer us to remain longer in this room. Come, my love. (*to MRS. PINCHBECK, taking her arm. Exit MR. DORRISON, MRS. PINCHBECK, and DORA, MRS. PINCHBECK underided in manner, DORA contemptuous, L.D.U.E.*)

LU. (*crossing to COLONEL*) Alfred !

DOR. (*after exit outside*) Lucy ? (*LUCY runs off, D.L.V.E.*)

COL. (*after pause*) I'll never tell another lie as long as I live. (*rain outside and wind*) And this is the end of my fine scheme for opening my father's eyes, and for preventing this woman from taking my mother's place on this hearthstone. I am ordered out. My host accuses me of endeavouring to undermine the affections of the woman he is about to make his wife. The woman herself, who encourages my attentions, whose obvious blandishments gave me the idea of making her exhibit herself in her true colours, repudiates me, and Dora thinks me false. My failure is complete, and it is for this I crossed the Atlantic. This is my welcome home. I am the prodigal son whom they order off the premises, and set the dogs at. (*going up*) I must leave this. (*steel blue lightning; looking at window*) Lord, what a night ! What matters a wet jacket ? I can walk to the "Nag's Head," and sit there till the mail train passes. (*pauses*) And I must leave her and my sister Lucy to the power of this woman, and to the odious attentions of that rascal brother. It's hard to part from him without one kick. I'll write to Lucy to bid her good-bye, to Dora telling her all, and to my father telling him, (*bitterly, crosses to table*) what were my intentions towards the lady. (*searching*) Is there any paper ? (*lightning*) How the lightning flares ; but it's not so blinding as a woman's eyes, not so destructive as a woman's tongue. (*sits to write at table, L.*) I can't write—I'll send to them. (*rising*) What if I go to my father's room, and tell him who I am ? He would only curse me as his rival. He would believe the woman, and order me from the house again. Again ! Sixteen years ago I stood on this very spot, and took a last look, as I then thought, at home. Home ! (*looking at picture over fireplace*) This is not my home now. Good-bye, England. I'll put out the gas and then I'll put out myself. (*turns out one gaslight on mantel shelf*) I won't unlock the doors, it would disturb them. I can climb over the garden wall. Good-bye, (*looking at his mother's picture*) this time for ever. (*turns out the other gaslight*)

(*Rain ceases ; stage dark. As he nears window, R., a strong flash of blue lightning. LUCY appears at window, R., her dress over head*)

LU. Alfred ! (*in a whisper at window*)

COL. Yes, dear.

LU. You haven't gone away then ? I know you've been thinking of it.

COL. My darling !

LU. Oh, don't kiss me, it's such a waste. I've brought somebody with me.

COL. Who ?

LU. Dora.

COL. Dora ?

LU. Yes ; we were talking in our room, and I told her all and why we had kept the secret from her.

COL. But why come through the rain, when——

LU. Dora would come to ask you to forgive her, and if we hadn't gone out by the door downstairs we should have had to pass pa's bedroom.

Lightning. DORA enters window, R., her dress over her head.

COL. I see.

DOR. (*crossing to him*) Can you forgive me ?

LU. Yes, forgive her, and while you are forgiving her, I won't look. I'm not afraid of lightning. (*goes to window*)

COLONEL *kisses DORA. A vivid flash of lightning.*

LU. (*alarmed, runs to COLONEL*) Alfred !

COL. What ?

LU. A figure at the window coming in. Perhaps a house-breaker. (*LUCY and DORA get c.*)

COL. A housebreaker ?

LU. I think so.

MRS. P. (*at window, R.*) John !

COLONEL *motions the two girls back. They retire at back of piano and crouch down.*

COL. Mrs. Pinchbeck !

MRS. PINCHBECK *enters window, dressed for a journey.*

MRS. P. I have crept through the rain to tell you I am yours and yours only. Just now I was tongue-tied. I could not speak with your eyes upon me, for I felt that I had behaved badly to him. When you leave this house, I am ready to accompany you—to-morrow—to-night—now—this instant—John, my own, first, fondest love, I am by your side !

(shot heard without. Girls shriek)

COL. What's that ?

MRS. P. Those girls here ?

BERTIE *dashes on through window, R., an umbrella in his hand all over mud ; falls on ottoman, R.*

BER. Help !

LU. Bertie !

COL. What's the matter?

BER. I don't know. As I was watching Lucy's window from the garden, somebody fired something; I fell down and hurt myself, and ran in here. (*goes up, R.C.*)

Enter MOUNTRAFFE, D. 1 E. L., in a gorgeous dressing-gown and cap; he carries a lighted candle. Stage light. MR. DORRISON enters window R., a double barrelled gun in his hand)

MOUNT. (*frightened*) I'm afraid the housebreakers have—there's going to be a row!

(*Exit, D.L. 1 E.; leaves candle, L., on table. Lights half up.*)

MR. D. (*to MRS. PINCHBECK*) I was watching the lightning from my window when I saw you cross the garden. You came after the man you love. I was about to follow, when another flash shewed me the figure of a man upon the wall. I took my gun, loaded it, and went down, for I thought it was a robber. To-night I have thieves within my walls, and not without. I fired in the air to frighten the thief, and followed him in here, where it seems I am *de trop*.

LU. (*in tears, up stage, R.*) You've nearly killed poor Bertie.

MR. D. Bertie! Was it him? He's more frightened than hurt.

BER. I don't know whether I'm hurt or not.

MR. D. (*to MRS. PINCHBECK*) You, madam, will find a carriage ready to convey you to the station early in the morning.

MRS. P. (*coolly, seated on ottoman, R.*) I am glad of it. My heart has spoken, and declared Colonel White to be its lord and master. Seek some woman of your own age.

MR. D. (*to COLONEL*) For you who introduced yourself by a lie—for I believe your letters from my son to be but forgeries—are you to leave this house unpunished and unscathed? Viper! I am an old man (*putting down gun*) but I have strength to resent the outrage. (*rushing at COLONEL; he is restrained by LUCY*) Out of my house, you dog!

LU. Father!

COL. For Heaven's sake! I am Alfred your son!

(*MRS. PINCHBECK rises thunderstruck. Picture*)

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE. — *As before.* BERTIE discovered lying on sofa. LUCY feeding him with jelly.

LU. Feel better, Bertie?

BER. Yes, dear.

LU. It's very nice being ill in the house, and having me to wait on you, isn't it?

BER. (*eating jelly*) Delicious!

LU. I do quite enjoy your illness.

BER. So do I. (*eating more jelly*)

LU. It's so pleasant to wait on you.

BER. Is it really?

LU. The sun is out and so is the jelly, and it is quite dry on the gravel. Do you think you could get up and sit in the garden?

(*rises and puts chair under piano*)

BER. I think I could, if you would let me lean on you.

COLONEL enters, D. U. E. L., with pistol case and horsewhip.

COL. (*down L.*) Well, Bertie, how goes it?

LU. Oh, better, he hasn't hurt himself this half-hour.

BER. No, every inch of me is bruises, but there are no bones broken.

COL. You are a dreadful fellow to tumble down, (*crosses, R.*) and hurt yourself. You must marry him at once, Lucy, or there'll be none of him left.

(*puts pistol case on table, R.*)

LU. I assure you I don't like his getting chipped in this way.

COL. You must turn the side that's broken to the wall.

LU. Oh, Alfred! (*seeing the pistol case*) Is that another present for me?

COL. (*opens case*) No, it's something to frighten brother Pinchbeck. Take him away. For I expect his sister here directly.

LU. Is she going to leave at once?

COL. I don't know.

BER. (*getting up with difficulty, very lame, leaning on stick*) I should like to kick Captain Mountraffe before he goes.

COL. That is a pleasure I propose myself.

LU. But what's going to be done, Alfred?

COL. I don't know, we shall see. I have a carte blanche from the governor to do as I think best.

LU. Is papa quite cured?

COL. He will be after amputation. Here comes the limb I'm to lop off ; so go. (*they look off, L.*)

LU. Can you walk, my Bertie?

BER. (*with stick, leaning on LUCY*) Give me your arm, your waist, and your shoulders, and I think I can.

COL. He knows all about it. Run away.

Exeunt BERTIE and LUCY, window R., into garden. At the same time enter MRS. PINCHBECK, D. 1 E. L. ; she closes door ; a pause.

COL. Well, Mrs. Pinchbeck, are your boxes packed?

MRS. P. No. Are yours?

COL. What do you mean?

MRS. P. That I do not see why I should quit this roof because your father's son introduced himself beneath it under a false name.

COL. But you accepted my father's addresses and then——

MRS. P. Accepted yours. True ; I did. I thought you were a man of rank and fortune. I was mistaken. You were an impostor, a nobody. I was dazzled by the prospect of a coronet. I am not an angel. (*sits L. of table, L.*)

COL. I agree with you. You're not.

MRS. P. And I fell into the snare. It's not the first time that man has lied and a woman has believed him.

COL. Nor the first time a woman has baited the trap, and man has fallen into it.

MRS. P. Men are so ready to fall.

COL. You're thinking of Eve who tempted Adam.

MRS. P. No. I'm thinking of the serpent who tempted Eve.

COL. But the serpent was the devil.

MRS. P. And the devil is the abstract resemblance of man. What chance had Eve against serpent, devil, and man combined?

COL. (*aside*) She's clever.

MRS. P. Let me congratulate you on your victory over an old man, your father, and the woman you professed to love. Treachery and deceit are the arms that men use.

COL. My duel was with you, and I fought you with the weapons you were best skilled in.

MRS. P. Your victory proves you an accomplished professor.

COL. I have saved my father.

MRS. P. Saved him? From what? (*rises*) From the happiness he promised himself for the remainder of

his days ? (*advancing to COLONEL*) I should have made him a good wife ; for I am weary of running about the world, and I should have been grateful to the hand that succoured me. If I should not have been happy, I should have been at least contented, and I could have smoothed my aged husband's path through life ; as only a clever woman can.

COL. You are fortunate in possessing so admirable an opinion of yourself. I am sorry for your loss, for the house is pleasant, and my father is rich.

MRS. P. Which accounts for his prodigal son's return. You came back to save your inheritance ?

COL. And to save my father giving me a step-mother I had heard so much of in America.

MRS. P. Do you wish to insult me ?

COL. No ! only to induce you to pack up.

MRS. P. Can't I insult you ?

COL. No.

MRS. P. Why not ?

COL. Because you're a woman, and I acknowledge the superiority of your sex over yourself.

Enter MOUNTRAFFE, D.U.E.L.

MOUNT. Pamela ! (*down c.*)

COL. (*seeing him, aside*) Ah, this is a very different affair. I needn't keep my temper now. (*after a pause*) I won't.

MOUNT. (*crosses to COLONEL*) I've been looking for you.

COL. I'm at your service, Captain. You've been in the army. Pistols—swords—at your pleasure.

(*g es to R. of table, R.*)

MOUNT. I am not blood-thirsty.

COL. I am. (*shewing pistol in case on table, R.*) So if you—

MOUNT. (*aside*) Cold-blooded ruffian !

COL. I'll fight you with pleasure. I'd as lief shoot a blackguard as a gentleman. Will you ?

(*takes up pistol-case, then going off, R.*)

MOUNT. No.

COL. Then apologise.

MOUNT. I don't mind admitting I'm wrong ; but no gentleman ever apologises.

COL. Ah, I see you want damages.

MOUNT. Just so.

MRS. P. (*aside to MOUNTRAFFE*) No ! I won't accept a farthing.

MOUNT. I will. (*crosses to MRS. PINCHBECK*) Don't be a fool. (*to COLONEL*) To come to business. You don't wish my sister to marry your father ?

COL. I don't.

MOUNT. And you don't wish to marry her yourself?

COL. Still less.

MRS. P. How he despises me!

MOUNT. How much will you give us to go?

COL. I see; your sister requires a dowry?

MRS. P. No! (*rising*)

MOUNT. (*aside to MRS. PINCHBECK*) Shut up!

COL. Name your terms.

MRS. P. Such humiliation! (*sits*)

COL. Anticipating your decision I have brought with me a blank cheque. (*producing it, and sitting at table, R.*)

MOUNT. (*sitting down opposite to COLONEL*) Ah! this is business.

COL. Don't sit down in my presence. (*MOUNTRAFFE rises*) What shall we say for blighted hopes, broken hearts, damaged prospects, &c., &c., &c.? How much?

MOUNT. Um! The match was a good one, and you're anxious to get rid of us. Say £500.

COL. (*nodding assent*) Five—

MOUNT. (*aside*) I wonder if he would have given more. (*aloud*) I mean £500 for damages. Then there's my sister's trousseau. She would have had a trousseau, you know. (*goes to MRS. PINCHBECK*)

MRS. P. (*R., aside*) Oh, the meanness! (*to MOUNTRAFFE*) Spare me!

MOUNT. Not a pair of gloves. (*crosses back to COLONEL*) For the trousseau, say £200.

COL. Two. (*to MRS. PINCHBECK*) Will £200 be sufficient, madam?

MRS. P. (*aside*) The torture!

COL. Five and two, seven. Is there anything else?

MOUNT. Well, if you like to stand a suit of wedding clothes for me.

COL. How much?

MOUNT. Say a twenty-pun note.

COL. £720. (*writes cheque and is about to cross it*)

MOUNT. Don't cross it, it will be no use to me if you do.

COL. There is the cheque, you must give me a receipt. (*rises, lays cheque on table*) I've brought a stamp so that my father may know that this affair is settled, and that you are paid.

MOUNT. (*sitting down after looking at COLONEL for permission to do so*) With pleasure.

C. L. Pardon me; the lady is of age, and she is supposed to be the injured party. I shall require her signature.

MOUNT. (*writes*) Pleasure. Received £720 — no £700, the

£20 is for me—£700 in consideration of which I, Pamela Pinchbeck, hereby give up all claims to the damages arising from an action for breach of promise of marriage already commenced by me—we'd better put it in that way—against Mr. Alfred Dorrison, sen., and hereby engage not to bring the aforesaid action. To-day, the—um (*rises*) Now, Pamela, sign that, cross the stamp there. (*crosses to L.*)

MRS. P. (*crossing to table, R.*) Where's the cheque?

(*COLONEL gives it her*)

COL. What a nature!

MRS. P. And the receipt?

COL. Here (*bending over table*), if you will kindly——

(*MRS. PINCHBECK tears up receipt and cheque*.)

Enter MR. DORRISON and DORA, D. L. U. E. ; LUCY enters window, R., and sits on ottoman, R.

MOUNT. What are you about?

MRS. P. To buy back my self-respect, and to get rid of you

COL. (*aside*) What a woman!

MOUNT. Make out another cheque, Colonel; it's a mere freak of temper. The fact is she's fallen in love with you—really—no swindle—on the square. (*sits on sofa*)

MRS. P. Well, I avow it. I do love you, as much as I despise him. I avow it, because I am about to leave you now for ever. At first I believed myself to be attached to you by the prospect of your wealth and greatness; but I was the dupe of my own worldliness, and I loved you for yourself alone. (*LUCY and DORA exchange looks*) This confession is my punishment. I am not all to blame. I never knew a mother's love or guidance. From childhood I have had to look to him (*signifying MOUNTRAFFE*) for protection and counsel. He married me when I was quite a child to an old man, bad as himself; and when he died, to an adventurer, who broke my heart at the same time that he excited my vanity. Since the death of my second husband, he has taught me that my duty in life was to find a third, a wealthy victim. I am but a woman, and I have been schooled into the belief that all the world was bad. This home, your father's kindness, your sister's gentleness, and this young lady's goodness, have taught me better. I have one talent, music; and that will enable me to live away from this bad silly man, whom I now renounce for ever. Forgive me for the evil I might have worked you. If ever you should hear of me, you will know that my repentance is sincere. Farewe l. (*going up*)

COL. Madam, your words have penetrated me deeply, me and mine. (*pointing to DORRISON, &c.*) Pardon the intemperance of my language. I did not then know you. I recognise in you not only a good woman, but a noble heart. Lucy, my love, give your hand to this lady, (*she does so*) whose surroundings through life have not been able to stamp out her native nobility of character. (*with deep respect DORA crosses to MRS. PINCHBECK, shakes hands with her, then goes back to L. ; MRS. PINCHBECK very much affected*) I trust that you will permit my sister and me to accompany you in the carriage. In leaving us you leave all friends, who can never cease to regard you, and all that concerns you, with the deepest interest.

MR. D. Give me your hand at parting. (*shakes hands with MRS. PINCHBECK*) If I have anything to forgive, it is forgiven freely. Good-bye, and Heaven bless you.

(*MRS. PINCHBECK, deeply affected, takes off locket from her neck, and puts it on piano, then goes off, D.L.U.E.*)

MOUNT. (*rising and going up*) That's a woman! After all that I have done for her. By——

He is going to pick up locket. COLONEL coughs and taps pistol-case as MOUNTRAFFE exits, D.L.U.E. BERTIE enters window, R.

COL. Yes, a real woman, who can't help being right-minded even when she's wrong. (*BERTIE comes down, R.*)

MR. D. I'm glad they're gone. Forgive me, my dear boy and girl, I feel heartily ashamed of myself. Alfred, how can I return the service you have rendered me?

COL. Very easily, father. By speaking favourably of me to this young lady's parents.

MR. D. What, Dora! Lucy has told me all about it.

COL. Has she? Then how can I return the service she rendered me?

LU. By speaking favourably of me to this young lady's parent. (*points to herself*)

MR. D. Oh, about Bertie?

COL. Yes, of course. You see Lucy has seen him, and he has seen Lucy; to be sure, they have neither seen anybody else, and *that* may account for it.

MR. D. We'll see about it some years hence.

COL. Yes, some years hence; eighteen or twenty.

BER. Eighteen or twenty! Don't keep us so long, Mr. Dorrison, for I know nothing will cure me of the habit of hurting myself except getting married.

COL. He considers marriage a cure for sprains.

MR. D. But at your age! Do you think you are in earnest?

COL. Oh, very much in earnest. He is just the age to be in earnest—for a short time.

BER. I love Lucy till I'm black and blue.

COL. Lucy, you will marry a small walking rainbow.

MR. D. (to COLONEL) And you're sure you won't regret Mrs. Pinchbeck?

(BERTIE goes up with LUCY, who sits at piano)

COL. No, only her misfortunes.

MR. D. Nor her brother? (smiling)

COL. That's her greatest misfortune; but happiness does not consist in brothers.

MR. D. In what then?

COL. In sisters, wives, and mothers, but not in step-mothers.

MR. D. But, Alfred, I thought you considered marriage such a foolish thing.

COL. Very foolish for fathers, but an excellent thing for sons.

MR. D. There seems to be a deal of love about us.

(sits, R. C.)

COL. Yes, we're an affectionate family. (all sit except BERTIE)

MR. D. And if all goes well when do you expect to marry?

COL. When? Immediately. (to DORA) With your kind permission.

MR. D. And where do you intend to pass your honeymoon?

DOR. On the Atlantic?

COL. No.

DOR. In what place, then?

COL. In what place? (LUCY begins to play "Home, Sweet, Home") Home! (looking at picture, then at DORA)

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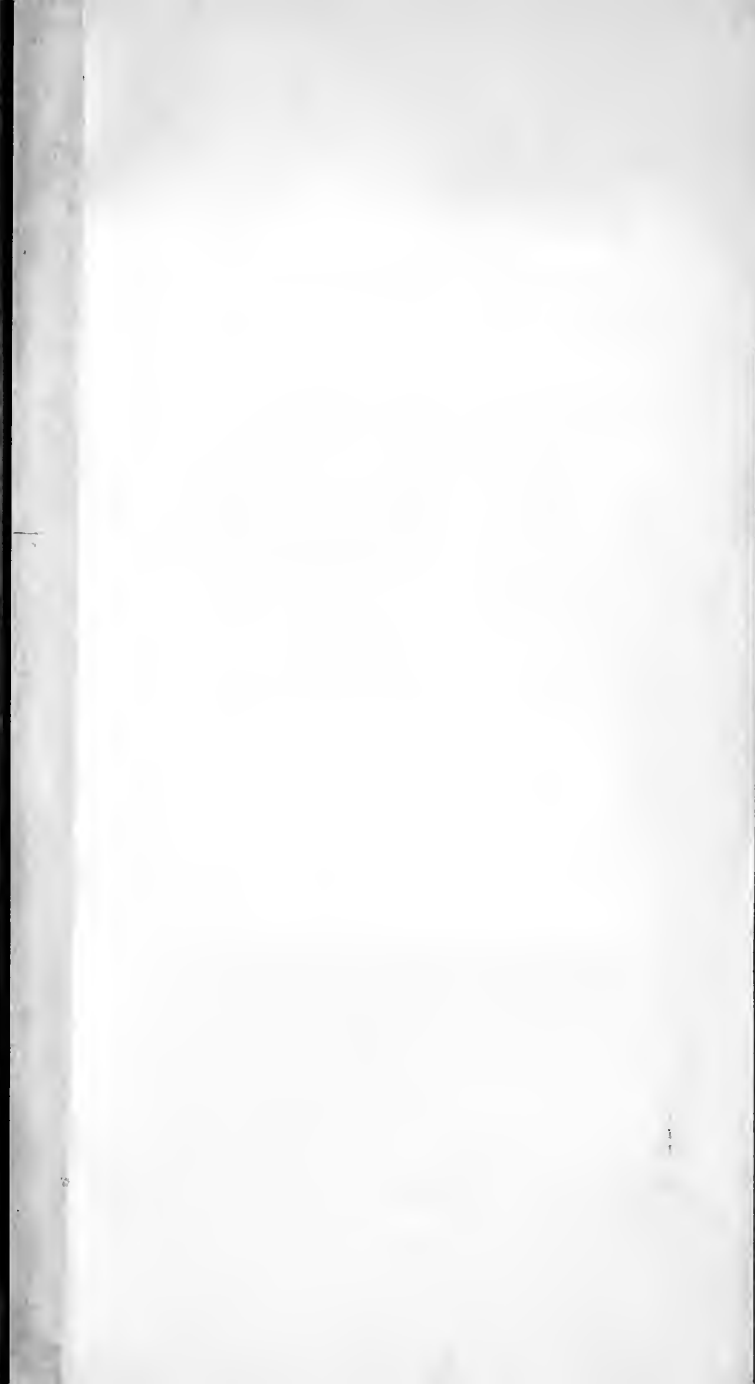
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